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Statement for Public Release

Subject: Concerns Regarding 2013 Sean MacBride Peace Award

Unfortunately, I'm very concerned about a substantial disconnect I discovered between what I've experienced in the last few weeks, and what's occurred in the rest of the world since my arrival at the U.S. Disciplinary Barracks in August. Unfortunately, I've been largely left out of the loop on the details about what's been occurring over the last several weeks. This partly due to my limited contact with the outside world during the in-processing phase of my arrival, but it's also because I've been trying to decompress and focus on other things after a lengthy and exhausting court-martial process.

The most obvious disconnect I discovered has to do with the "2013 Sean McBride Peace Award" that was supposedly accepted on my behalf by Ms. Ann Wright (a retired Colonel in the U.S. Army). I say supposedly because—I had absolutely no idea I received this award, let alone accepted it. In fact, I first found out about the award when I began receiving mail containing quotes from Ms. Wright's acceptance speech.

Now, please don't get me wrong—I'm absolutely flattered and honored to receive this award (or any award, for the matter), but I was shocked and frustrated about what's occurred here: that it seems that I've been left out of the process. And, to make matters worse, now there exists the possibility that there might be more false impressions out there in regards to how I feel about the award, how it ties to my actions in 2010, and who I am.

For example, Ms. Wright states that "[w]hen [I] was told by [my] lawyer [Mr. David Coombs] that IPB [International Peace Bureau] had selected [me] as the recipient of this year's award, [I] was overwhelmed that such an organization would recognize [my] actions as actions for peace."¹ There are a few issues with this sentence:

a. The conversations I've had with Mr. Coombs have been somewhat brief and heavily focused on the common legal and logistical minutia that needs to be worked out after a large court-martial. There's little room in our scheduled time (set by the U.S. Disciplinary Barracks) for discussion of anything not focused on the authentication of court-martial documents and transcripts or my ongoing request for a Gender Dysphoria treatment plan that follows recognized medical standards².

¹ "Pvt. Chelsea Manning given 2013 Sean MacBride Peace Award," by Ann Wright, Private Manning Support Network, 2013.09.19.

² See World Professional Association for Transgender Health, "Standards of Care," Seventh Version, 2011.09.25.

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b. From my perspective at least, it's not terribly clear to me that my actions were explicitly done for "peace." I don't consider myself a "pacifist," "anti-war," or (especially) a "conscientious objector." Now—I accept that there may be "peaceful" or "anti-war" *implications* to my actions—but this is purely based on *your* subjective interpretation of the primary source documents released in 2010-2011. I believe that it is also perfectly reasonable to subjectively interpret these documents and come to the opposite opinion and say "hey, look at these documents, they clearly justify this war" (or diplomatic discussion, or detention of an individual). This is precisely the reason why I avoided overbroad and unnecessary redactions on my end while providing (and attempting to provide) these documents to media organizations in early 2010. I'm a "transparency advocate." I feel that the public cannot decide what actions and policies are or are not justified *if they don't even know the most rudimentary details about them and their effects.*

In the next sentence, Ms. Wright says that "[I] know the history of the MacBride Award."³ As embarrassed as I am to admit this—I don't. In fact, I only learned of its existence in the last few days. I certainly know who Sean MacBride is, and what Amnesty International is. I even vaguely know what the IPB is—but I *had no idea* of the award's existence.

I simply don't know what's happened here. I absolutely don't believe there is a conspiracy, or any bad intentions on anyone's part. But, whatever has happened, I don't believe it's productive. And, I believe it would be totally dishonest if I don't make the public aware of this disconnection. So, to avoid any disconnection or miscommunication in the future, all of my "official" statements and position coming from *me* shall be in the form of a signed letter or release, similar to this one, with my letterhead and date at the top of the first page, and my signature at the bottom of the last page. Statements or positions filtered through my attorney or other representative should be considered unofficial, unless they deal with purely legal issues and positions, or they are accompanied by a signed "official" letter or release.

And lastly, I'd like to clarify that, as far as I'm concerned, I no longer have any rank. While I still have a *pay grade* of E-1 (with total forfeitures of pay), I do not have an associated rank while in confinement. I prefer to use "Ms." or no title, instead of using "Spc.," "Pfc.," "Pvt." or other military titles. And, I'd like to thank everyone who has avoided misgendering me and switched to using my new name and feminine pronouns.

Thank you,



CHELSEA E. MANNING

³ "Pvt. Chelsea Manning given 2013 Sean MacBride Peace Award," by Ann Wright, Private Manning Support Network, 2013.09.19.